

Lead Cost Reduction Through Applied Technology

Prospector™

The Challenge

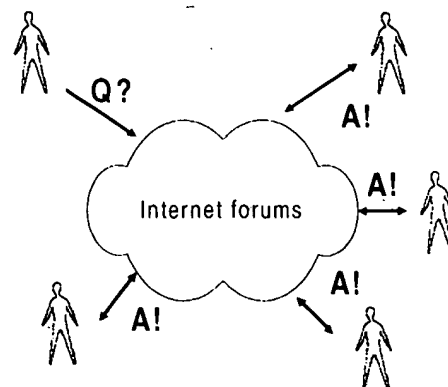
Qualified and motivated buyers. How do you find them? Using conventional approaches such as direct mail or trade shows you can easily spend hundreds of dollars for even a half-baked lead. Add the cost of subsequent discovery and qualification to find true 'intenders', and the cost skyrockets. And it's not just that conventional approaches to lead generation are expensive. It's time consuming. Navigating the sales funnel can take months.

You may have considered using the Internet to generate and gather leads. If you believe the hype, you'll save time and money. But how to proceed? Should you buy banner ads, advertising your product? That will generate lots of 'clickers' and 'tire kickers', but few 'intenders'. Or perhaps you've considered putting a lead form on your corporate website. That's not a bad start. But you can't rely on your company's web site alone. Most of your best prospects will *never* visit your web site, much less supply detailed information about themselves.

What's needed is a means of identifying real intenders, before the competition, that can be shepherded through the sales funnel quickly.

Internet Discussion Forums: A Powerful Source of Leads

Customers have always relied on word-of-mouth recommendations, in the course of making a buying decision. Historically, the counsel of a small number of knowledgeable colleagues was solicited. With the advent of the Internet, users can tap a worldwide community of expertise through Internet discussion forums. More than 1,000,000 posts are made to public discussion forums each day. And traffic is doubling every four months. In a discussion forum, a prospect can ask for advice on what to buy and hear what others have to say about your product.



Internet Discussion Forums

The Prospector™ Solution

Imagine monitoring the conversation. You could identify and contact intenders (Not suspects) at the right time in the sales cycle, before the competition. You could position yourself into the middle of your competitor's deals-deals you might never have known about otherwise. But with so much to sort through, where do you begin? That's where Sift can help.

Prospector™ is an Internet forum-based lead generation service, which provides timely, high quality leads that your salesforce can act on immediately. And it's easy to use. You consult a personal customer service representative and describe the type of leads you want. In plain English. We do the rest.

Prospector™ continuously monitors the conversation on more than 100,000 USENET newsgroups, mailing lists, and web forums. Using proprietary technology, intenders expressing an interest in buying your company's products/services are automatically identified. Leads are automatically forwarded to you by email. For an additional fee, a profile including name, USPS address, email address, telephone number and additional demographic information such as job title, employer, employer SIC code, and posting history can be provided.

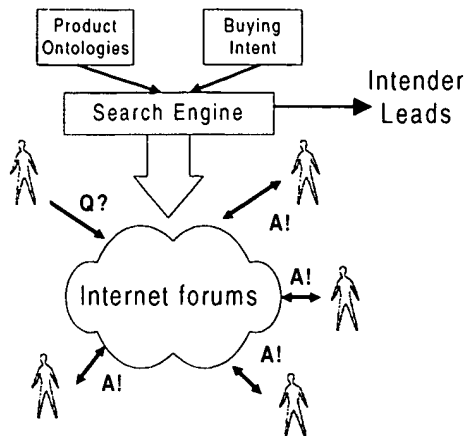
The result? Table-ready leads.



Internet Direct Marketing Specialists

How It Works

Although Prospector™ is simple to use, the technology underlying it is anything but. To capture leads, two difficult problems must be addressed. First, an expression of buying interest must be detected. In addition, the product/service which is the object of interest must be identified.



How It Works: Sophisticated Search Technology and Proprietary Data Mining Tools

Getting Qualified Leads...

Because postings to Internet forums are freeform and unstructured, detecting an expression of buying interest is a challenge. Prospector™ uses natural language processing to search for more than 100 commonly used phrases which indicate buying intent.

...for the Right Products

Mining leads for the right product is also essential. Prospector™ makes use of a sophisticated taxonomy of related product search terms called an ontology. For example, an ontology for workstation products would "know" that Sun, HP, DEC, IBM and SGI offer workstations, as well as the myriad product names and model numbers offered by each. Common ways of referring to the product category (e.g. file server, database server, desktop, deskside) would also be included. Sift has already created ontologies in more than 5,000 product categories, and can readily create more on demand.

Optional Data Overlays

Once a posting containing an intender lead has been identified, it can be enhanced and augmented. Using third party direct marketing databases, as well as its own proprietary technology, Sift can append company size, SIC code, annual revenues, postal address and even job title and telephone number onto the lead.

The result? An enhanced 'intender' lead ready to close!

Name: Mark A. Moehling Job Title: Business System Analyst Address: Nantel Corporation 4114 East Wood Street Suite 3 Phoenix, AZ 85040-1941 Company: Annual Revenues: \$ XX Million. XX yrs old. XX employees Telephone: 602-437-6453 Email: moehling@xantel.com Competition: Onyx, Clientele Need: Immediate		Deal summary and customer profile Posting made to an Internet forum
Subject: Looking for a Support System From: Mark Moehling < moehling@XANTEL.COM > Date: 7 May 1997 20:03:45 GMT Message-ID: <5kqn71Sfr@falcon.ccs.uwo.ca> Organization: Unknown Organization -- Relayed by Sendmail Newsgroups: uwo.comp.helpdesk Hello. I am looking for a Support product for my company which will be accessible via the WEB and integrates with MS SQL/Server. Our company is a startup software development company and we plan on having our first release in June and I would like to have a system in place. I have gotten my list down to Onyx and Clientele. Has anyone else done any research in this area. Thanks Mark		

An Enhanced Intender Lead

For More Information

Prospector is already helping many forward-thinking organizations augment their deal streams. And it can do the same for your company.

To discuss your needs or obtain additional information, contact the Sift sales department at 408-541-7633 or sales@sift.com.



Internet Direct Marketing Specialists

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